



April 2021

*Dear Constituent,*

Thank you for contacting me about the right to roam.

I know the value so many people here in our area place on access to the countryside. The new measures which have now been set out by the Secretary of State will not affect ramblers, the right to roam or rights of way. Instead, the new proposed measures will be applied in specific circumstances relating to trespass with intent to reside.

As you may be aware, the Home Office consulted on measures to criminalise the act of trespassing when setting up an unauthorised encampment in England and Wales. Ministers also consulted on other measures to strengthen police powers in order to tackle unauthorised encampments. The views expressed throughout the consultation have been considered and have informed the Government's next steps, including the conditions for the new offence which will be put to parliament for scrutiny. I would like to assure you that a person must meet the conditions of the new offence for enforcement action to be taken against them. The conditions for the new offence seek to ensure that anyone accessing the countryside, including ramblers and hikers passing through privately owned land, will not be caught by the new proposals. My Ministerial colleagues are clear that the intention behind the new offence is to deter trespassers from setting up or residing on an unauthorised encampment and to support action to tackle unauthorised encampments where necessary.

It is very important to promote recreation in the countryside and understand the benefits outdoor activities can produce both physically and mentally. Our countryside is of great value and it cannot be understated just how much the scenery means to people. I am therefore encouraged by Government action to ensure we leave our environment in a better state for future generations, including our wonderful countryside.

I support the Government's strong track record on access to the countryside. For example, it has enabled the establishment of a 2,700-mile path around the entire English coastline, meaning walkers will be able to enjoy, explore and experience some of our finest and most important cultural and natural heritage – from the white cliffs of Dover to the industrial heritage of the North East.

When completed, the England Coast Path will be the longest continuous coastal walking route in the world. Furthermore, the Prime Minister has committed to protecting 30% of the UK's land by 2030. This means an additional 400,000 hectares, the size of the Lake District and South Downs national parks combined, will be protected to support the recovery of nature.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

**CHRIS HEATON-HARRIS MP**  
**MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR DAVENTRY**